REMARKS

The last Office Action and the Advisory Action has been carefully considered.

In the Advisory Action the Examiner indicated that the elimination of limitations "and detent means" and "on both sides" required further consideration of the claim. In connection with this, claim 1 has been amended only in formal aspects without deleting "and detent means" and "on both sides".

It is noted that claims 1 and 3-8 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102 over the European patent 655373.

Claim 2 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103 over the above mentioned European patent in view of the French patent 2,631,300.

Also, the drawings are objected to and the claims are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112.

In connection with the Examiner's objection to the drawings, it is believed that the features of claim 6 are shown in the drawings, since the struts at the ends of the side walls are illustrated. However, if the Examiner still of opinion that these features are not shown, he is respectfully requested and authorized to cancel claim 6 by his amendment.

In connection with the Examiner's objection and rejection of the claims, the claims have been amended substantially as suggested by the Examiner, in all instances.

It is believed that the Examiner's grounds for the formal objections and rejections are therefore eliminated.

It is respectfully submitted that claim 1, the broadest claim on file, as clarified now clearly and patentably distinguishes the present inventions from the references applied against the claims.

It is believed to be advisable to more clearly explain the present invention and the reference. It seems that the Examiner did not accurately interpret the European patent document. The both side walls of the bearing element 10 are identified with reference numeral 12 while each side wall has

an outer surface 14 and an inner surface 16 as disclosed in column 3, lines 15-20. The distance between the outer surface 14 and the inner surface 16 determines the wall thickness of the corresponding side wall 12 so that they can not be connected with one another by the hub 32. Figure 2 is somewhat misleading, since the reference numeral 12 is provided on the outer surface 14, while the reference numeral 14 is close to the side wall 12. Figure 2 however clearly shows that the intermediate space between the inner surfaces 16 of the parallel side walls 12 at both sides of the hub 32 has the same clearances, so that the bearing element 10 is suitable only for wiper arms with the identical widths. The side wall 12 has a rear part 24 which is displaced outwardly relative to the inner surface 16, so that in this region the distance between the rear parts 24 is greater than between the inner surfaces 16. However, the rear part 24 serves not as abutment surface or guiding surface for the wiper arm. In the invention however this is exactly the purpose of the same.

The European patent document does not provide any hint or suggestion that such features can be provided in the bearing element of the reference, and therefore the present invention can not be derived from the reference as a matter of obviousness.

The French reference 2,631,300 also does not teach the new features of the present invention which are defined in claim 1. Therefore any combination of these two references would not lead to the applicant's invention as defined in claim 1.

Claim 1 should be considered as patentably distinguishing over the art and should be allowed.

As for the features of claims 2-4 and 6-7, these features are known per se. However, the combination of the features of these claims with the feature of claim 1 is new and useful, because it allows a greater variation variety. None of the references applied by the Examiner or cited in the foreign prosecution show a bearing element which can be mounted into wiper arms of different widths by turning it around a normal axis. Also, the features of claims 5 and 8 are not disclosed in any of the references.

In view of the above presented remarks and amendments, it is respectfully submitted that the claims of the present application should be considered as patentably distinguishing the present invention from the prior art, and the application should be allowed.

Reconsideration and allowance of present application is most respectfully requested.

Should the Examiner require or consider it advisable that the specification, claims and/or drawings be further amended or corrected in formal respects in order to place this case in condition for final allowance, then it is respectfully requested that such amendments or corrections be carried out by Examiner's Amendment, and the case be passed to issue. Any costs involved should be charged to the deposit account of the undersigned (No. 19-4675). Alternatively, should the Examiner feel that a personal discussion might be helpful in advancing this case to allowance, he is invited to telephone the undersigned (at 631-549-4700).

Respectfully submitted,

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CLAIMS

Amend the following claims:

1. A bearing element (30) for hinging a wiper blade (10) to a hook-shaped end (20) of a wiper rod (18) of a windshield wiper, comprising a hub (36), which is open over part of its circumference, onto a supporting bolt (28) of the wiper blade (10) and when mounted, is held by the hook-shaped end (20) by way of contracting faces (46,62,66) and detent means (70, 76, 78), two side walls (32,34) that are connected by way of the hub (36), and a number of lateral struts (60, 64, 70) that extend in [the] a longitudinal direction (38) on both sides of the hub (36), wherein [the] clearances (40, 42) between guiding surfaces of the side walls (32, 34) are different sizes on [the] opposite ends for guiding of wiper [arm] arms with different widths.

2. The bearing element (30) according to claim 1, characterized in that one of the [clearance] clearances (40) of the side walls (32, 34) is reduced on one end by [means of] beads (44).

3. The bearing element (30) according to claim 1, characterized in that an outer contour of the hub (36) has a contact face (46) for a hook-shaped end (20) of the wiper rod (18), with a [smaller] small bending radius (48) and a [smaller] small material thickness (52) and a first lateral strut (60) is disposed at a distance (56) from the hub (36) in the longitudinal direction (38) that corresponds to the smaller material thickness (52).

4. The bearing element (30) according to claim 1, characterized in that on its outer contour remote from the hub (36), the first lateral strut (60) has a contact face (62) for a hook-shaped end (20) of a wiper rod (18) with a larger bending radius (50) and a larger material thickness (54) and a second lateral strut (64) is disposed at a distance (58) from the first lateral strut (60) in the longitudinal direction (38) that corresponds to the larger material thickness (54).

5. The bearing element (30) according to claim [1] 4, characterized in that the second lateral strut (64) has a flattened contact face (66) that is oriented toward the hub (36) and is for a narrower wiper rod (18) with a hook-shaped end (20) that has a smaller bending radius (48) and a smaller material thickness (52).

6. The bearing element (30) according to claim 1, characterized in that an additional lateral strut (70) is disposed at [the] ends of the side walls (32, 34), which limits [the] a pivoting motion of the wiper rod (18) so that [the] legs (72, 74) of [the] a hook-shaped end (20) extend virtually parallel to the longitudinal direction (38) in the mounted position.

7. The bearing element (30) according to claim 6, characterized in that on the side walls (32, 34), starting from the additional lateral [struts] strut (70), at least one detent projection (76, 78) is disposed [in the inside], which in the mounted position, rests against [the] an inner side of the long leg (72) of the hook-shaped end (20).

8. The bearing element (30) according to claim 7, characterized in that in relation to the additional lateral [struts] strut (70), the at least one detent projection (76, 78) is disposed offset toward the hub (36) in the longitudinal direction (38) [to such an extent] so that the wiper rod (18) with a smaller material thickness (52) and a smaller bending radius (48) is held in a play-free manner with a slight inclination in relation to the longitudinal direction (38).

Amended claims:

1. A bearing element (30) for hinging a wiper blade (10) to a hook-shaped end (20) of a wiper rod (18) of a windshield wiper, comprising a hub (36), which is open over part of its circumference, onto a supporting bolt (28) of the wiper blade (10) and when mounted, is held by the hook-shaped end (20) by way of contracting faces (46,62,66) and detent means (70, 76, 78), two side walls (32,34) that are connected by way of the hub (36), and a number of lateral struts (60, 64, 70) that extend in a longitudinal direction (38) on both sides of the hub (36), wherein clearances (40, 42) between guiding surfaces of the side walls (32, 34) are different sizes on opposite ends for guiding of wiper arms with different widths.

2. The bearing element (30) according to claim 1, characterized in that one of the clearances (40) of the side walls (32, 34) is reduced on one end by beads (44).

3. The bearing element (30) according to claim 1, characterized in that an outer contour of the hub (36) has a contact face (46) for a hook-shaped end (20) of the wiper rod (18), with a small bending radius (48) and a small material thickness (52) and a first lateral strut (60) is

disposed at a distance (56) from the hub (36) in the longitudinal direction (38) that corresponds to the smaller material thickness (52).

4. The bearing element (30) according to claim 1, characterized in that on its outer contour remote from the hub (36), the first lateral strut (60) has a contact face (62) for a hook-shaped end (20) of a wiper rod (18) with a larger bending radius (50) and a larger material thickness (54) and a second lateral strut (64) is disposed at a distance (58) from the first lateral strut (60) in the longitudinal direction (38) that corresponds to the larger material thickness (54).

5. The bearing element (30) according to claim 4, characterized in that the second lateral strut (64) has a flattened contact face (66) that is oriented toward the hub (36) and is for a narrower wiper rod (18) with a hook-shaped end (20) that has a smaller bending radius (48) and a smaller material thickness (52).

6. The bearing element (30) according to claim 1, characterized in that an additional lateral strut (70) is disposed at ends of the side walls (32, 34), which limits a pivoting motion of the wiper rod (18) so that

legs (72, 74) of a hook-shaped end (20) extend virtually parallel to the longitudinal direction (38) in the mounted position.

7. The bearing element (30) according to claim 6, characterized in that on the side walls (32, 34), starting from the additional lateral strut (70), at least one detent projection (76, 78) is disposed, which in the mounted position, rests against an inner side of the long leg (72) of the hook-shaped end (20).

8. The bearing element (30) according to claim 7, characterized in that in relation to the additional lateral strut (70), the at least one detent projection (76, 78) is disposed offset toward the hub (36) in the longitudinal direction (38) so that the wiper rod (18) with a smaller material thickness (52) and a smaller bending radius (48) is held in a play-free manner with a slight inclination in relation to the longitudinal direction (38).